

July 2010

BLUEPRINTS

A monthly publication of the Asheville Home Builders Association

JULY

AHBA Night: Asheville Tourists Ballgame

McCormick Field

Thursday, July 22
7:05 Game Start

Your ticket includes General Admission and entry into the Pepsi Pavilion for a fun evening of Tourist Baseball, food and drinks! FREE for members, \$10 per guest

Upcoming Events

July 5

AHBA Office Closed
in observance of the
July 4th Holiday.

July 20

New Member Orientation
AHBA Office
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Open to all members!

July 29

Build Pac Fundraiser
Ferguson Enterprises Inc
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

\$25 per ticket, all proceeds support Build-Pac. Network with area builders and community elected officials.

August 15

Annual Picnic
Camp Rockmont

More details in August Issue.

NAHB Weighs in on Fire Protection at Code Hearings

The NAHB rallied for interests of homebuilders at the International Code Council's Final Action Hearings in Dallas in May. The May hearings covered the International Residential, Building, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas and Existing Building codes. Final Action Hearings for the International Energy Conservation Code as well as the IRC's energy provisions and the International Property Maintenance and Zoning codes will take place in Charlotte, N.C., in October.

NAHB took a position of either support or opposition on 229 of 633 proposals during the May hearings. Of particular significance for home builders in this year's hearings are code changes on fire protection, accessibility for the disabled and stair geometry.

Fire protection

NAHB successfully testified for more tradeoffs that allow greater housing density when fire sprinklers are installed in one- and two-family homes.

In the International Residential Code, officials approved a code change proposal that introduced a new fire separation distance table that allows for a reduction in the distance between one- and two-family dwellings when the structures are equipped with residential sprinklers. The proposal also allows for zero lot line construction when sprinklers are installed.

Another code proposal addressed additional fire protection for exposed floors in a basement or crawlspace. The original proposed code change would have required all floor assemblies within the dwelling to be protected by an underside layer of 5/8-inch gypsum board for all floors — except those over crawlspaces with 3 feet or less void space below subfloor, in structures equipped with fire sprinklers or floor assemblies that can achieve a 30-minute fire-resistant rating.

Recognizing strong support from the fire service and fire officials and the likelihood of its approval, NAHB worked successfully to modify the proposal to reduce its impact on home construction while addressing the floor collapse concerns of fire fighters. The modification preserves the ability to use exposed floor assemblies composed of 2-inch by 10-inch or greater dimensional or composite lumber.

For floor assemblies constructed with I-joists and other engineered wood products, the protection requirement was reduced from 5/8-inch to 1/2-inch gypsum board. Additionally, an exception was included that permits exposed floor framing for small areas that are typically needed for equipment and utility rooms. Crawlspaces not intended for storage or fuel-fired appliances were also exempted.

NAHB also brought common sense to a proposal in the International Fuel Gas Code that would have prevented the use of any unvented heater to be installed in a home. If passed, unvented fireplaces, room heaters and similar products would have been banned outright from residential use.

Visitability

NAHB successfully opposed a proposal that would have mandated "visitability" requirements for housing. This broad-ranging, three-part proposal would have added new definitions for egress requirements as well as "visitability" requirements for a new Type C unit for all one- and two-family dwellings. NAHB worked to successfully convince ICC members that requiring all homes to comply would not be feasible or practicable and in some cases could cause drainage problems after rain or snowstorms.

[continued on page 9]



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Calendar

— Meetings —

Professional Women in Building

Tuesday, July 6 @ 8:30 am
AHBA Office

Tuesday, August 3 @ 8:30 am
AHBA Office

Board of Directors Meeting

July 8 @ 3:00 pm

Parade of Homes Committee

July 22 @ 3:30 pm

— Events —

Asheville Tourists Ballgame

Thursday, July 22
Game Start: 7:05 pm,
Pick up pre-purchased tickets outside
gate beginning at 6:30 pm
Tickets: FREE for members, \$10 per
guest 5 yrs and older.
McCormick Field

New Member Orientation

Tuesday, July 20
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Open to all members to learn about the
benefits of their AHBA membership, required
for all new members.
AHBA Office

— Education —

PWB Council Social Media Course- 2 remaining in Series

AHBA Office

3 pm - 5 pm

Cost: \$15 per class

July 14: Basic functions and how to use Social Media for your business

July 28: Advanced topics on Social Media

We are focusing on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

AHBI Education Program: NCBI Courses
AHBA Office: August 17, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm
Register online at www.ashevillehba.com

Personnel: Managing Your People

Instructor: Greg Isenhour
Designations: AB, AA ARS

Personnel: Charting Your Path to Success

Instructor: Greg Isenhour
Designations: AMB, AMA

NAHB Holds Educational Webinars

A five-part, interactive webinar series from NAHB will explore a new home industry topics and trends including using social media to sell homes, green building, the cost of doing business, syndicate financing and home technology.

The "Building Conversations" series will feature industry experts from around the county who will share insider views on the five topics and encourage participants' questions and comments during each webinar as well as afterwards through NAHB's growing social media network.

The sessions will be held from 2:00-3:00 p.m. EDT on the second Thursday of each month from now through November (except for August).

Attendees can earn one hour of continuing education credit toward their NAHB designations for each session.

The upcoming webinar in July is:

"Using Home Technology to Boost Profits," Thursday, July 8

Expert panelists will illustrate how builders can work with electronic systems contractors (ESCs) to easily incorporate home technology into their projects — at every price point — to create a profit center for their businesses.

The fee for each webinar is \$24.95 for NAHB members. The fee for the five-part series is \$99.75 for NAHB members and \$149.75 for non-members. Participants must be registered to hear a webinar or its rebroadcast.

To register, visit www.nahb.org/buildingconversations.



Residential Loan Guarantee Program

Executive Officer's Message by Caroline Sutton

It's true that things have started looking up for the nation's home builders. After one of the deepest recessions in generations, jobs are slowly returning. This is key to restoring the confidence of prospective home buyers who have been rightly concerned about pursuing a major financial commitment during a time of grave economic uncertainty. Giving further impetus to a healthier marketplace, housing remains remarkably affordable, prices are reasonable and mortgage rates have been hovering at historic lows.

This may sound like a recipe for the full-scale housing recovery that is needed to sustain the economic gains we have seen in recent months. With inventories of new homes just about depleted in many parts of the country—in fact, the inventory of new homes is at a 42-year low—builders now should be gearing up to produce new homes to meet sizable pent-up demand from the last couple of years and rising demand generated from an expanding economy. Unfortunately, there is still a large problem that our members are facing – most banks have largely cut home builders off from the credit they need to finance new projects or complete those still underway. Until this situation is resolved, housing will have a tough time gaining traction.

The most encouraging news on this issue recently came from Capitol Hill, with legislation introduced in the House that would alleviate the credit crisis by creating a new residential construction loan guarantee program within the Department of Treasury to encourage and support lending to builders with viable projects. We desperately need to restore the flow of credit for home building, and that is what H.R. 5409, the Residential Construction Lending Act, would accomplish.

Until home building is truly up and running, it would be a mistake to assume that the U.S. economy has established a sure footing on the road to recovery. Without access to credit, builders remain in a precarious position, jeopardizing the progress that has been made so far in returning to economic health.

This is why, more than ever our Build Pac dollars and members supporting members are so important! Pull together with one another during these times and help us overcome this hurdle! Stay in touch with the AHBA as we continue to push forward, working for our members.

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Education Sponsor

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[builders tips]

Builders' Tip: Shop-Made Miter Box Comes in Handy on Scaffold

If you've ever lugged a chop saw onto a scaffold 20 feet off the ground to cut narrow 1x moldings, you'll appreciate this tool.

With some scrap pieces of 3/4-inch plywood or pine, you can build a simple miter box that will guide precise cuts. Here's how:

Attach the vertical fence to the base with glue and 1-5/8-inch drywall screws.

Cut 45-degree and 90-degree kerfs in the fence to guide the handsaw blade, and you're ready to go.

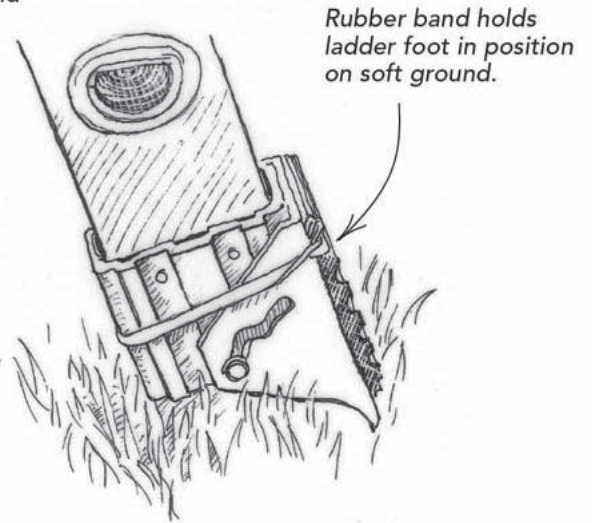
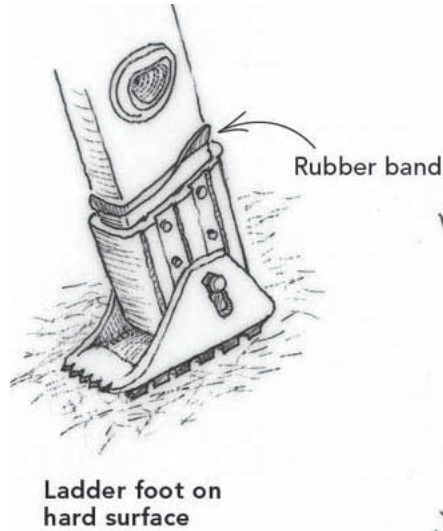
This rig isn't limited to outdoor work, either. With a fine-toothed saw blade, you can make precise cuts in all kinds of moldings.


Cutting mitered returns for window stools or head casings is tricky with a powered miter box because the short pieces want to fly all over the place. This miter box will handle that task with ease.

— Robert Goodfellow, Clinton, Conn.

Tips & Techniques provided by Fine Homebuilding.

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NAHB Member Advantage Program

Liberty Mutual Insurance Company -NEW

Auto, Homeowners and Renters Insurance for NAHB Members and Their Families. The NAHB Member Advantage program now provides you and your family members with access to high quality auto, homeowners, and renters insurance – through our newest affinity program with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

As an NAHB member, you can take advantage of a significant group discount on Liberty Mutual auto, home and renters insurance, with convenient payment and enrollment options to meet your needs.

With this program, you will have access to the following new insurance options:

Auto Insurance
Home Insurance
Condominium Insurance
Renters Insurance
Motorcycle Insurance
Watercraft Insurance

Ask about the multi-policy discount for insuring both your home and auto! It's your car, your home and your life. You do the right things to protect them from harm – installing smoke alarms, getting oil changes, wearing seat belts. You buy insurance too, but, like anyone, you hope you'll never need to use it. Need additional coverage? That's easy too. Licensed representatives will explain your options in clear terms and recommend the best match for your specific situation, whether you need to protect your car, home, boat, or condo.

Want a Quote?

For details, or a free quote, call 1-800-531-3398 or visit www.liberty-mutual.com/nahb. If you prefer an in-person quote, you can also stop into any local Liberty Mutual office and identify yourself as an NAHB member (#117234).

**Discounts and savings are available where state laws and regulations allow, and may vary by state. To the extent permitted by law, applicants are individually underwritten; not all applicants may qualify.*



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NCHBA Legislative Update

A Message from our State Executive Vice President, Mike Carpenter

On April 21, 2010, nearly 70 NCHBA builders and associate members visited Capitol Hill in Washington to lobby our Congressional delegation. Our top issue, then and now, is the unprecedented credit crisis facing our industry—the inability of our builders to obtain financing for land acquisition, development, and residential construction (AD&C). This crisis has already caused many builders to go out of business and threatens the survival of many others. This is a problem that can be effectively addressed only at the federal level.

During our appointment with Rep. Brad Miller (D-13th District), we suggested that a proposal which President Obama outlined in his January State of the Union address to create a \$30 billion small business lending fund for financial institutions might be a possible vehicle to help solve this credit crisis. Rep. Miller, a key member of the House Financial Services Committee, agreed to help us again (last year, at our request, he was the principal author of a letter, also signed by 46 of his colleagues, to federal regulators on the subject of AD&C loans).

Last week, the House Financial Services Committee took up the President's proposal (HR 5297) and Rep. Miller offered an amendment which would establish a "residential construction loan guarantee program" within the Treasury Department and appropriate \$15 billion of the \$30 billion to this fund. No vote was taken by the committee on the amendment by pre-arrangement with Chairman Barney Frank (D-MA) in order to continue ongoing negotiations. It is expected that a final amendment will be offered during House floor debate of the bill. (For more information, [click here](#))

However, with what has been accomplished so far, it is evident that the time that our members took to visit Capitol Hill last month was well worth the effort in keeping the focus on this critical issue. We thank Rep. Miller for his outstanding and continuing efforts on behalf of our members, our industry, and future homebuyers across the country. We also thank our colleagues at NAHB for their excellent representation of our members' interest.

We will keep you informed of future developments.

Mike Carpenter
NCHBA Executive Vice President

Legislative Committee Update

By Thomas McClain, Legislative Committee Chair

This has been a busy month for your legislative committee. We have had two meetings this month to deal with many issues affecting our industry. During our meetings one of the items we dealt with was the upcoming Build-Pac BBQ that will be held at Ferguson Enterprises, Inc. on July 29th. We are inviting all candidates running in our area as well as current City and County leaders. All of these candidates will be given a questionnaire dealing with our industry, from their answers we will determine who supports us and who will try and make our jobs more difficult. This will help our organization make a difference in the upcoming election so that we can help get those who are for us elected. Also, we met with David Gant and staff to discuss the upcoming slope requirements about to be adopted by the county. Currently we are reviewing documents and making suggestions to hopefully make this legislation easier to understand and more practical to use in the field. We will continue to work on your behalf and keep you informed as things continue to evolve this busy election year. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call or email your input- AHBA Office: 299-7001 or info@ashevillehba.com.

MEMBER NEWS

Share your accomplishments, awards, and announcements with fellow members. Send your news to kc@ashevillehba.com and we will be glad to include it in the newsletter!

Builder/Architect Magazine Celebrates 15 Anniversary

Builder/Architect magazine will publish its 15th Anniversary Edition & Directory in August 2010. This "first-of-its-kind" publication will showcase the "Best of the best" custom homebuilders in WNC, plus leading architects, and the region's top-rated golf and non-golf communities.

In addition to Builder/Architect's regular distribution channels, the 15th Anniversary Edition & Directory will be available for 13 months at the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center. Hosting over 200,000 visitors annually, many of which are potential newcomers and home-buyers, this is the perfect outlet for this special edition. Advertising rates and other information are available by contacting Builder/Architect magazine by phone or fax at (828) 627-3737, or by email at: skybirdK@att.net.

IBS Information for 2011

Mark your calendars: The opening day to register for the International Builders Show and to make hotel reservations is Monday, August 2. The deadline to make reservations in the NCHBA room block is Friday, October 29. North Carolina will have rooms in the following hotels: Hampton Inn Convention Center (\$129), Homewood Suites by Hilton I Drive Convention Center (\$139), and JW Marriott Orlando Grande Lakes (\$189).

Home & Garden Expo Winner Takes Home \$1000

Congratulations to Diane Leary of Asheville, North Carolina for taking the Grand Prize at the First Annual Home & Garden Expo! Diane won the \$1000 cash prize that was offered from the AHBA. She was very excited about the prize saying "I'm so excited, I'm speechless." The AHBA also gave away a number of prizes to lucky winners every hour, including such great gifts as AHBA T-Shirts and Ingles Gas Cards. The \$1000 prize came as a culmination to the 2 day Expo held at the WNC Ag Center, showcasing the products and services of area homebuilding professionals. Congratulations Diane!



AHBA & Ferguson Hosts Build-Pac Fundraiser

Please plan to attend the AHBA Build-Pac Fundraiser held at: Ferguson Enterprise, Inc., 1100 Ridgefield Blvd Ste B. July 29th from 5:30 until 7:30pm
BBQ Dinner & Drinks Provided – Tickets are \$25 per person

You must have a ticket to attend – all ticket proceeds go directly to Build Pac, must be paid with personal funds. All ticket holders will be entered for grand prize drawing! RSVP to office@ashevillehba.com. Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the event.

Come out and network with AHBA Members, Elected Officials and those running for office!

Support Build Pac – Support the Industry!

Call for Entries for 2010 STARS Awards

The STARS Awards are a centerpiece of the 21st Century Building Expo and Conference. Each year, the gala salutes the outstanding professional performance of HBA members throughout the region --builders, associates, realtors, media and advertising professionals, and many more -- with the presentation of the prestigious STARS Awards. Local home builders associations are also honored for their outstanding achievements.

Enter the STARS Awards! To be eligible for consideration in the 2010 awards program, you must be a member of the National Association of Home Builders. Projects must have been completed between January 1, 2009 and July 31, 2010.

Deadline: All entries (fee and entry materials) must be received no later than July 12, 2010. Fee: \$100 per entry

The marketing benefit of reaching for the STARS:

A STARS Award can play in the big picture of a company's overall marketing and sales strategy. Marketing programs in general are all aimed at convincing people to try out or to keep using particular products or services. Professional recognition such as the STARS Awards can be a great addition to your marketing tool belt!

- Highlight the quality and benefits of your product or service to current and potential customers,
- Enhance your professional reputation,
- Give you an edge over the competition,
- Encourage existing customers to buy more of what you sell, and
- Promote your business.

Questions? Contact Kathryn Atkinson at (919) 676-9090.

AHBA Member Uses Drive Gift Certificate for Project

AHBA Member Herb Freeman just completed a bunny hutch that matches his house by using a gift certificate won by completing the AHBA Membership Drive last November. Pro-Build in Hendersonville generously donated gift certificates to the Drive. Herb's wife Kristine had this to say, "The staff at ProBuild was really sweet and helped us pick the materials. Anna, Herb and I showed up with a cardboard model of what she wanted to build and we spent about an hour in their warehouse getting help! It was a great family project and we created a custom hutch that matches our house, and it cost less than buying a kit."



Thanks to Herb Freeman for supplying this photo of his membership rewards hard at work and to ProBuild for supporting the AHBA through gift certificates to the membership Drive!

AHBA Members on Front Cover of Builder/Architect

Congratulations to Tommy and Brian Sineath of Sineath Construction for being on the front cover of Builder/Architect this month! Their beautiful house is the featured home and is covered extensively throughout the magazine.

AHBA Spring Golf Tournament Held at Black Mountain Golf Club

On May 20, 27 teams of builders and associates gathered at Black Mountain Golf Club for the Annual Spring Golf Tournament hosted by the AHBA. Twelve holes had vendor tents set up with goodies for the teams, including hotdogs, wings, homemade salsa, cornhole games and unique giveaways! The AHBA held a game of Poker Run for the players to take a chance on- the player with the best hand of five cards won a grand prize of \$150. It was a beautiful day with great weather and wonderful company as the 108 players made their rounds across the course. Some new players came out this year, as well as some new faces as Sponsors. Thanks to everyone who supplied goodies for the players bags, especially to First Restoration Services for supplying the bags. Special thanks to our sponsors: Beverage Sponsor: Pearlman's Carpet One. Eagles: West End Cabinets, Westall Chandley, J.Coleman Waterproofing, Keystone Kitchen & Bath, Solid Surface Specialists, Carolina Colortones, Brand Vaughan Lumber of Asheville, Hi-Tech Integrated Systems, Building Environmental Systems, ProBuild, McGuire, Wood & Bissette Construction Law Team, and Deltec Homes. Our Birdie Sponsors: Builders FirstSource, MATH Insurance Services, Salon Blue Ridge, Tucker Materials, Inc., GBS Lumber, Pella Window & Door Co., White Insurance, 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty, Congratulations to Team MATH Insurance for winning first place, Team Fifth Third Bank in second place, and Team Menich Construction coming in third. Congratulations to J. Coleman Waterproofing for winning the Players' Favorite Hole! They'll be back in the Fall with a FREE Eagle sponsorship!



Turn Your Prospects and Buyers Into Fans — Like a Sales Rock Star

Recording artist Lady Gaga, with her bold, weird and wacky show, recently sold out her concert at the UCF Arena in Orlando — after moving the show from a slightly smaller venue because, as she says, she knows her audience, worships her fans with a vengeance and knew she would need a bigger arena. Can you imagine that level of dedication and loyalty from your buyers and prospects?

Actually, you can become a new-home sales rock star and achieve that Lady Gaga kind of loyalty and following among buyers and prospective buyers — and it won't take loud music or weird costumes to do it.

The following are three diverse businesses I frequent that each now count me as one of their loyal fans.

See what they have in common:

AlphaGraphics, a business design and print center in Florida

I recently put in a rush order for new business cards from the company because I was heading out of town for a speaking engagement. I planned to pick up the cards before 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before I left town. But I got sidetracked and when I looked up from my computer, it was already 4:55 p.m. — and I was a half hour away from the store.

I called the store in a complete panic but the folks there reassured me that I would have my cards in time for my Monday morning presentation. When the person in charge started making arrangements to deliver the cards to my home, we both discovered that I would be eating at a restaurant that night that was halfway between the store and my home. Not too much later, I was eating dinner when Danny, the AlphaGraphics representative, arrived with the cards, had me approve them and then drove off.

Was this rock star service? Was it ever!

My local UPS Store

I have my business mail and packages delivered to my local UPS store and the staff always takes care of me. When I'm out of town, they not only notify me by e-mail that I have received a package, they often leave me a message that lets me know who the package is from. Not too long ago, two heavy boxes with my new "Sales Rock Star" T-shirts arrived and they

loaded them into my car for me. Does service like that make me a happy fan of the store? It sure does.

Tim Jones, handyman

I have so much trust in my handyman, Tim Jones, I don't need to be home when he's working on projects for me. We go over his to-do list of projects and then I head off to work — leaving behind a signed blank check on the kitchen table and a key to lock up my house. Jones is fast and efficient. He gives me a fair price, cleans up once the work is done and he does the job correctly the first time. Am I a loyal fan? Yes. Do I send him referrals? Of course.

How to Build Your Fan Base

One overriding theme among the three businesses is attentiveness to the customer. It's important to almost every business — no matter the type.

Prospects must be continually contacted in creative, unusual ways so that you can stand out from your competition and show prospects why they should become fans and buy from you.

Follow-up ideas like these will stick with them:

Help them sell their former home by suggesting a few top Realtors® who aggressively sell homes in your town. Also, recommend staging companies that can help them get their home in ready-to-sell condition.

Don't close the book on your buyers after you've handed them the keys. Invite them to home owner seminars. Buyers who become fans refer their friends to their builder.

The following activities are fun ways to stay in touch with your buyers once they have moved in:

Send a monthly e-newsletter.

Give them landscaping tips.

Offer them budget-wise decorating tips.

Bring by holiday cookies or goodies.

Conduct home owner seminars on topics of interest to them.

This article originally appeared on the NAHB Sales and Marketing Channel and was reprinted with permission by NAHB.

Green Means Different Things to Different People

Green builders need to tread carefully in drumming up interest in their homes, and in their marketing they need to zero in on specific segments of the marketplace where they believe their best prospects can be found, Tim Costello, president and CEO of Builder-Homesite, told the NAHB Green Building Conference in Raleigh, N.C., last month.

"It's not a single market," Costello said. "You have to decide who is the target market and create messages that will touch them," with the expectation that buyer decisions will be driven more by emotion than logic.

"The green market is a mosaic of buyers of different psycho-demographic segments," he said. "It's far more complex than a few frugal penny savers" who are primarily concerned about cutting their utility bills.

Included in the mix of possible customers are the true environmentalist, who is sophisticated and will give some thought to the products going into the home and wants to know more about the philosophy and operations of the company; the concerned mother who is worried about poisons in the home; the socially conscious hipster who wants to be seen doing the right thing; the patriot who cares about the bearing on the national interest of such global issues as energy consumption; the self-sufficient survivalist family that home-schools its children; and the technology geek, he said.

Among the themes that can work in attracting buyers of green homes, he said, are energy conservation, preserving the quality of life for future generations, protecting the environment and saving resources, saving money, protecting the nation and reducing greenhouse gases.

Most receptive to green home buying messages, he said, will be primarily women who are 18 to 54 in age and who comprise the vast majority of people actively shopping for housing. Green marketing will resonate with both activists and pragmatists, he added, who make up about 60% of consumers according to research by the Sheldon Group, public relations consultants. And 30% of people who were surveyed said that a \$25 to \$50 reduction in their monthly energy bills would spur them to action.

"Don't try to be all things to all people," advised Costello, because "you may not be able to satisfy all their needs."

What Consumers Don't Know About Green

Reviewing survey findings that have been presented at past green building conferences, Costello pointed out that 76% of consumers pride themselves on knowing something about green. Fifty-five percent respond that green homes are important, but only 40% of them can then identify a green feature. Roughly half of consumers surveyed can't name a renewable energy source.

Green has extremely low brand awareness, he added, with 64% of consumers unable to identify even one green brand, and Walmart is the one mentioned most often. "Forget building a green brand," he said. "Seventy percent of people who bought a home could not remember the name of the builder 12 months later, so make sure you tell your home owners who you are before you pick up the check."

According to survey results from McGraw Hill on consumers' trusted sources of information, people are most confident about what they are told by friends and families, but when they are looking for what's available they begin their search on line, which is a complete change from a couple of years ago.

Websites now present the "biggest and best opportunity" for green builders to market their homes, Costello said, and they provide

the easiest access and are the most economical of the various advertising media.

He cited the website of Plantation Homes in Texas as an example of how the Web can be used by builders most effectively. Its e-commerce Green Living uses an embedded video in which a woman presents features of the program that are explained further by going to several links. For visitors, this is an "interactive" experience that provides "incredible engagement," he said. "If you want to get the lift, you have to put that out there."

Costello was less enthusiastic about the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, because "you have to be followed; this is not advertising. People have to be so interested in you they want to follow you."

Three Bullets in the Gun

Again referring to Shelton research, he said that there "are three bullets in our gun that people are aware of." What customers mean by green refers to lower energy bills, environmental impact and the health/toxic home issue. After that, "it falls off to nothing."

There are other possible approaches to get specific consumers interested in green, he said, "but they haven't heard from us yet about why they need to buy green."

Green builders need to determine what's most important to their buyers. Men, for example, tend to want to save money while women are more socially conscious and think globally. "You have to change the message according to what part of the country you're in. This is just one population of users and you need to figure out what makes them tick," he said.

Builders, for their part, undersell green, according to Costello. "Look at the design centers and what they tell prospects. Half of the options offered are never mentioned, and in the half that are covered, roughly half the information is wrong or misleading." Products with a technical component are typically not covered.

To address this problem, he suggested integrating online content from product manufacturers into the process. Through a virtual design center, "people can sell it to themselves." Experience has shown that the online approach can boost sales of technical options by 50%, he said.

Builders should also keep in mind that many "green consumers want others to know they are green" and for them green symbolizes who they are across the community. In its appearance, the home should suggest what is being sold inside, creating an allure. "Don't look traditional," he said.

Finally, he warned builders about the information paradox. "More information makes people feel more helpless and less satisfied with the process," said Costello. Hone and clarify the message, he said, because consumers "do not want to feel incompetent or helpless" when they are participating in the sales process. "The more you know, the less you know how to deal with it," he said.

This article was reprinted with permission from NAHB. For information about green resources available from NAHB, call Calli Schmidt at 800-368-5242 x8132.

NAHB Weighs In at Code Hearings

[Continued from page 1]

The proposal would have required the main entry door of a home to be at grade level, with no step-up, and would have required the interior hallways, living rooms and kitchens to be easily accessible to those in wheelchairs by requiring wide-access aisles.

The proponents of the code change posed it as a social issue, rather than one relating to health or safety. NAHB argued that anyone can add these features to a new or existing home at any time, and that building codes are not the appropriate venue for mandating provisions that promote social change.

In fact, NAHB encourages the inclusion of many of the proposed accessibility features on a voluntary basis, as witnessed by the efforts of NAHB's 50+ Housing Council to promote universal design practices in home construction. However, NAHB is opposed to code-mandated "visitability" requirements and similar attempts to regulate the use of personal property.

Stair Geometry

A two-part proposal in both the IRC and the International Building Code would have changed the current 7-3/4-inch riser and 10-inch tread stair geometry for residential R-2 and R-3 occupancies, townhouses and one- and two-family dwellings to require a 7-inch riser and a 11-inch tread depth.

The increase in tread depth and reduction riser height would have significantly increased the required footprint for stairs in new homes and made it much more difficult to construct smaller, more affordable homes and townhouses.


Both proposals were soundly defeated and the current permitted stair geometry will remain.

For more information, e-mail Calli Schmidt at NAHB, or call her at 800-368-5242 x8132.

AHBA Members Run in Chamber 5K

On June 4, the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce held the Chamber Challenge 5k. The race had record participation with 1,000 people taking to the course. Local companies participated with teams of four along with individual runners in the 3.1 mile race. A first this year, the AHBA had a team run in the race. Josh Abrams from more SPACE place, Bob Duffy from Biltmore Farms Homes, Chris Brock from Brock Builders, and Mike Bates from Living Stone Construction, Inc. all ran the 5K representing the AHBA. The team came in with a great final score and proudly boasted their AHBA T-shirts! Staff were on hand to cheer them on as they took off and came around to the finish line. A complete set of both team and individuals results can be found at the ChamberChallenge.org website. Thanks to these awesome representatives for displaying their proud connection to their Association to the local community!





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Integrating Marketing Campaigns Will Garner Best Traffic

“New and improved” marketing techniques have emerged with the maturation of online media. To guarantee optimal results, an online marketing campaign builds on the tenets of traditional marketing campaigns.

The “improved” part comes with increased ability to track results and the ability to reach larger audiences cost effectively.

Some marketing experts suggest that home builders follow a different maxim — “out with the old, in with the new.”

It’s true that the new age of technology and communication have put traditional advertising and marketing in the back seat while social networking, blogging and Internet advertising seem to be driving most campaigns.

Many marketers have been drawn to social media marketing as they continue to look for ways to get the most bang from their stretched-thin marketing budgets.

However, if the lessons learned from years of managing traditional advertising campaigns are abandoned, home builder marketing campaigns may be headed the way of the new and improved debacle of the 1980s, New Coke — down the proverbial drain.

When marketing new homes, it’s better to integrate traditional means of planning, message formation and distribution into a digital campaign to make campaigns smarter, more effective and trackable.

Improving the Basics

Integrated campaigns actually take marketing experts back to the basics — identifying the target market, defining messages and finding the right media mix to deliver those messages.

Weaving traditional marketing into an online media campaign works to strengthen the overall marketing effort and creates a plan that can be tracked through website analytics and immediately tweaked based on results.

This malleable quality — the ability to measure and react quickly as consumers respond to marketing messages and media — is perhaps the most important aspect of the improvements introduced by online marketing. Marketing experts used to say “50% of your marketing budget is wasted, if we only knew which 50%.”

The great news today is that all advertising can now be tracked, including traditional sources.

For a few years, builders have placed unique 1-800 phone numbers and URLs on billboards. This makes it easier to gauge the effectiveness of those placements by measuring website traffic and phone calls.

Now Facebook pages and Twitter handles are appearing in specialty magazine ads and other printed publications, with the goal of increas-

ing the builder’s fans and followers on those social networking sites.

Even targeting direct mail pieces with a special incentive or coupon to a specific landing page of a builder’s blog or website helps focus efforts and identify both the effectiveness of a mail piece and the stickiness of a blog.

Connecting the Dots

Creating a strategy with specific goals to achieve and specific messages to communicate to target audiences is instrumental in tracking and analyzing campaign effectiveness. Tracking key performance indicators on a monthly basis will show the success of each source of advertising specific to each marketing campaign.

How will all this tracking help? Consider Circle 75, an Atlanta town-home community, which was recently featured in a newspaper ad in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. Analysis of the community’s website showed a small spike in direct traffic around the time the ad ran.

This increase in site visitors is expected with an effective ad. It is interesting to note, however, that the same ad placed in conjunction with a banner ad on the same newspaper’s website and a landing page on the builder website resulted in more traffic and a higher conversion rate.

The website tracking report of central Florida home builder Highland Homes revealed that a small portion of website traffic was coming from the Middle East. This phenomenon was a bit of a mystery for a few days until Highland Homes’ director of marketing, Kathie McDaniel, MIRM, put the pieces together — the traffic was from soldiers getting ready to complete their tour of duty and return home.

A targeted placement in the military base’s newsletter and direct mail pieces to areas surrounding the local military base proved an effective way to supplement online marketing with traditional marketing.

Most successful marketing plans have always included a media relations component. As with other marketing activities, online outlets offer a “new and improved” means of reaching reporters.

Even with reductions in print subscribers, mainstream media still look for stories to publish. With budget cuts at the papers, reporters and freelancers rely more heavily than ever on press releases and other suggestions for stories.

Newsworthy articles are syndicated both online and in print and coverage in print still brings traffic, buyers and sales. One of the ways to communicate with the media is through social media. Getting reporters to follow and helping them find experts online is one of the keys to getting printed offline.

Adapting to a New Market Reality

It’s no coincidence that “new and improved” marketing techniques have emerged in tandem with significant shifts in the economy and on the cusp of dramatic changes to home buyer demographics. Many of the formerly tried-and-true techniques are now simply too expensive or have been replaced to entice and attract a different buyer segment.

At no time in recent memory have home builders needed, smarter, more trackable marketing perfectly priced for shrinking budgets. In short, marketing is now, more than ever, accountable for ROI. You can’t get any newer and more improved than that.

Mitch Levinson, MIRM, CSP, MBA is a top new-home sales producer and a managing partner with mRELEVANCE, an Internet marketing, public relations and social media agency focused on meeting builder and developer needs in a changing marketplace.

This article originally appeared on the NAHB Sales and Marketing Channel. It is reprinted here with permission from NAHB.

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In the Know...

2010 Committees and Councils

Activities Committee

Nathan Lawrence- Co-Chair

The activities committee would like to thank all of our sponsors and players for another great golf tournament. How could you not have a fun filled day with all the food and beverages supplied by our Eagle sponsors? The committee is working on our annual BBQ at Camp Rockmont on August the 15th and is also in the final stages for selecting a location for the Christmas Gala. The feedback we received from last December was positive for the cocktail party format and we will continue the party atmosphere this year. Stay tuned for more details.

Associates Committee

Renee Maxwell- Co-Chair

The Associates Committee is still wrapping up from the Home & Garden Expo. Be sure to call the office or send an email with any ideas or suggestions you may have for 2011. We will be meeting soon to discuss planning for the next Expo- if you are interested in joining this committee and helping plan the event, please contact the office!

Parade of Homes Committee

Steve Royster & Jason Weil- Co-Chairs

We have 14 entries from the early bird deadline! It looks like we will have another good field of entries this year. The sponsorships are being snapped up quickly as well. Don't miss this great opportunity advertising your business. We had a bit of discussion about the banquet, and have decided to keep the banquet at the same location which precipitated moving the banquet up a day. We discussed whether to continue the judges reception and where that reception might be located. The topic of occupied homes in future parades is continuing in discussions. We talked about whether it would be better to have a separate open house tour for occupied homes, whether we should charge for admission to homes if we allow occupied homes in the parade to keep better control of guests, and discussed putting out a questionnaire to builders to get their input on this hot topic. Don't forget, the advertising and sponsorship deadlines are coming up fast, don't neglect this super opportunity to drum up some more business.

Professional Women in Building Council

Gina Kidder – Secretary/Treasurer

The Professional Women in Building Council is awarding the 2010 PWB Scholarship to Monica Whitmire. Monica is a senior at Enka High School and will be attending the University of North Carolina Charlotte to major in Architecture and minor in Art to become a licensed Architect. Monica's specific career goal is to obtain a Master's Degree in Architecture while working to obtain additional certificates. Monica states that "my biggest focus on residential design is to incorporate environmentally friendly aspects into every house, just because something is green doesn't mean it has to look it." Monica's application exemplifies her leadership capabilities, work ethics and community involvement through volunteering with several organizations. Monica's academic scores and grades are very impressive as well as the several letters of recommendation stating "Monica is so intelligent and focused on her future; she is a great student and an amazing young woman". Congratulations Monica Whitmire!

The PWB would like thank all the applicants that submitted an application to the PWB Scholarship. We wish you the best of luck and you are welcome to submit again next year. We are accepting donations to the PWB scholarship fund for 2011. If you are interested in making a donation please contact the AHBA office.

Check us out! The PWB has a Fan Page on Facebook, search for Asheville Professional Women in Building and follow us online.

Build-PAC Update

Sean Sullivan- NCHBA Build-PAC Chair

Our NC Build-Pac contributions to date are only \$1000 from meeting our goal. It is critical for us to meet or exceed our goal so that we can get back our local portion for our races here. So far, about 10% of our membership has contributed to the campaign. Although this number is up from years past, it also means that 90% of our membership has not yet given. If you have seen the importance of contributing to the defense of your industry, please consider making a personal donation today. Your livelihood depends on it! Below are the individuals who have donated in 2010!

Alan Best, Best Built, Inc.

Amanda Ballew, more SPACE place

Brad Kee, Kee Mapping

Brenda Dunlap, Sears Commercial

Chris Craddock, Carolina Drywall

Chris Lyman, McGuire, Wood & Bissette Construction Law Team

Christopher Fox, Christopher Fox Builders

Clint Farish, DRA Living

Damion D. Brookshire, On Time Construction & Remodeling, Inc.

Dave Davis, Southern Concrete

David Rand, DRA Living

Demetri Ibarra, O & D Framing

Don Thompson, Thompson-Rhodes Builders, Inc.

Gerry Stewart, Your Floor Stop

J. Koehn, Concrete Specialties, Inc.

James Bound, Greencraft, Inc

James Carr, Mountain Town Carpentry

Jan Coleman, J Coleman Waterproofing

Jennifer Duvall, Asheville Savings Bank

Jill Jones, Westall Chandley

Jim Demos, Demos Builders

Jim Foley, More Space Place

Jim Joly, Builder/Architect Magazine

Jim Roberston, ProBuild

John & Nancy Thompson, Thompson Properties, Inc.

John Gustafson, Gustafson Construction Co.

Jorg Ronke, Pella Carolina, Inc.

Josh McGee, Westall Chandley

Joshua Abrams, more SPACE place

Judy Dinelle, 84 Lumber

Ken Dinkins, Nova Kitchen & Bath

Kirk Johnson, Johnson Construction

Laura Livaudais, Preferred Properties

Maria Aponte, Salon Blue Ridge

Marty Williams, Foundation Specialists, LLC

Greg Spicer, MATH Insurance

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Michelle Snowden, more SPACE place

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Paul Franklin, Architectural Photographer

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Rich & Patty Kubica, K-Wall Poured Walls

Richard Soderquist, Soderquist Construction Company

Robert Duffy, Biltmore Farms

Robert Spear, Spear & Wills Builders, Inc.

Robi Eckley, Ferguson Enterprises

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Ryan Mclellan, Copperwood Builders

Sean Sullivan, Livingstone Construction

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Skip Brewer, Walnut Cove Builders LLC

Steve Royster, Bass & Royster Builders

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Terry Walton, Westall Chandley

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Tim Alexander, HomeSource Real Estate and Construction

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William Leidheiser, Thompson-Rhodes Builders, Inc.

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Fletcher, NC 28732-9514
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Accurate Accounting
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Asheville, NC 28806-9539
(828) 670-6464

Allied Industrial Co
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Old Fort, NC 28762-1360
(828) 652-6304

**Asheville Construction Inc.
(ACI)**
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Asheville, NC 28816
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Mars Hill, NC 28754-0018
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Chip Emery
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- New Members -

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4600 Hendersonville Rd. Suite A
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828-684-0017
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Fletcher, NC 28732
828-684-0007
Interior Trim
SPIKE: Jim Forward

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Chris Pressley
120 Christ School Road
Arden, NC 28704
828-216-8113
Concrete, Specialty & Decorative
SPIKE: Chris Craddock

Salon Blue Ridge

Maria Aponte
518 S. Allen Rd.
Flat Rock, NC 28731
828-455-8685
Building Materials: Home Centers
SPIKE: Audrey Loder

***Pending New Member Orientation**

Whispering Rock Properties, Inc.
Michael Barrett
75 Merrills Ridge Rd.
Asheville, NC 28803
828-299-8826
Log Homes
SPIKE: Bill Bugbee

To educate and engage new members within the association, we have a New Member Orientation. AHBA Members are required to attend the one hour New Member Orientation as the final step in the application process.

- Pending Members -

Atelier 359

Leslie McCormick
PO Box 8360
Asheville, NC 28804
850-502-4775
Architects
SPIKE: Richard Soderquist

Bottego Enterprises, Inc

Alfred D. Bottego
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Alexander, NC 28701
828-254-4929
Landscape Contractors
SPIKE: Steve Frellick

R.A. Thomas Electric & C.O.

Specialist
Russell A. Thomas
20 Battery Park Ave, Suite 900
Asheville, NC 28801
828-258-3999
Electrical Contractors
SPIKE: Greg Spicer

Krog Homes Inc.

Dale Krog
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Asheville, NC 28806
828-284-0382
General Contractor
SPIKE: Tim Alexander

Precision Craftsmen

Alfred Bottego
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Asheville, NC 28816
828-545-2723
Carpenters
SPIKE: Steve Frellick

The Mike Taylor Co., LLC

Mike Taylor
310 Stone Mtn Farm Rd.
Black Mountain, NC 28711
828-669-9313
Excavating, Grading & Clearing
SPIKE: Steve Royster

Vision Design Collaborative, PA

Stephen Wyda
85 School Road East
Asheville, NC 28803
828-230-2679
Architectural Illustrator
SPIKE: Richard Soderquist

Waste Pro of North Carolina

Tim Petree
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Arden, NC 28704
828-684-7790
Waste Disposal
SPIKE: Howard Feree

- Sorry to See You Go -

The AHBA is sorry to see the companies below drop their AHBA memberships. If you know these past members, or do business with them, give them a call and help us get them back to the AHBA!

Artisan Plastering, Inc.
Associate

Carolina Wall-Crete, LLC
Associate

Moisture Id, LLC dba Kestrel
Construction Builder

Victor Burleson Construction, LLC
Builder

C W Soderquist Builders
Builder

Chestnut Hill Construction Services
Builder

Top of the Line Construction
Associate

Watkins Drywall
Associate

Carolina Cabinets, Inc.
Associate

Healthy Homes Enterprises, Inc.
Associate

Universal Forest Products
Associate

PLEASE READ

In compliance with our Bylaws and the policies which have been put in place by our Board of Directors and the Membership Committee, Association procedure is to have new member applications approved by the Board of Directors and by the General Membership. Please look at the lists of all Members. If you know of any compelling reason that any applicant should not be considered for membership, please contact any AHBA staff member at 828-299-7001 or email your comments to the AHBA at info@ashevillehba.com. **All information given to the AHBA is held strictly confidential.**

Delinquencies and Foreclosures Worsening?

The Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA) reported that seasonally adjusted delinquencies for all loans rose to 10.1% in the first quarter, up from 9.5% the previous quarter and 9.1% a year earlier. At the same time, foreclosures started for the first quarter rose to 1.17%, up slightly from 1.14% in the fourth quarter 2009, but down from 1.34% a year earlier.

In another hopeful sign, foreclosures started for subprime loans fell to 3.29% in the first quarter from 3.51% the previous quarter and 4.55% a year earlier. This may be largely because lenders made few subprime loans during the last year or so. Fraudulent loans should have been weeded out by now, along with households that were in over their heads from the start.

Most foreclosures now should arise from normal life events such as unemployment, illness and divorce, and from borrowers who choose to walk away from their underwater mortgage, even though they can make their monthly payments.

There remains cause for concern over the percentage of loans that are 30 days past due — a measure of loans that are slipping into trouble and possible candidates for future foreclosure. After falling for three consecutive quarters, the delinquency rate rose to 3.45% in the first quarter from 3.31% the quarter before, though the rate was down from 3.77% a year earlier.

Federal Housing Administration loans turned in better performances — with the rates for 30-day, 60-day and 90-day delinquencies all lower in the first quarter of 2010 than the quarter before.

The disparity may be attributed to the seasonal adjustment process, the MBA points out. While the process normally clears up seasonal variations, it may actually be creating some confusion at present. So, while getting a true reading on delinquencies may still be a bit premature, the MBA, with a note of caution about the process, believes that the delinquency situation may be improving.

However, foreclosures continue to be concentrated in relatively few states. Florida and California account for more than a quarter (29%) of all foreclosures started in the first quarter. When including Texas, Georgia, Arizona, Illinois and Michigan, the seven states account for more than half (52%) the foreclosures started. With Ohio, Nevada, New Jersey, New York and North Carolina included, the 12 states account for 67% of the foreclosures started.

Clearly, the country is not out of the foreclosure mess, yet, but the worst may be over and we can expect a slow improvement in coming quarters. At minimum, there seems to be no further degradation in mortgage quality. As the economy continues to improve, that should help reduce the rate of foreclosures.

Nonetheless, foreclosures are a drag on the market as home builders are forced to compete with a “fire sale” product.

2010 Parade of Homes is in Full Swing

The AHBA is excited to announce the Parade of Homes for 2010 is gaining momentum! At time of print, the AHBA has received 15 entries. Sponsorships are filling up and advertising efforts are advancing. We are ready for an exciting event for 2010!

The Parade of Homes Committee is working diligently to prepare for the Gala, to be held at the Crest Center Pavilion, as in AHBA tradition. They are also working hard to perfect the judging process and are gearing up to recruit qualified judges for the two-weekend event. If you have any questions for the committee, please feel free to contact the office anytime!

We would like to thank our sponsors so far, without these dedicated companies, the Parade of Homes could not be possible. Thank these folks next time you see them at an AHBA meeting!

The featured Builder with the coveted front cover photo shot will be C.Skip Brewer, with Walnut Cove Builders.

Other sponsors include:

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2010 Parade Builders [at time of print]

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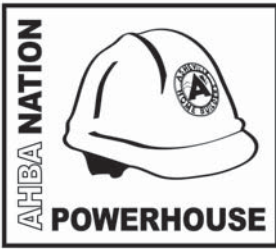


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EPA Rule Changes and Proposed Rules

North Carolina's Lead Hazard Management Program for Lead-Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting (LHMP-RRP) Rule became effective January 1, 2010. In North Carolina, the Health Hazards Control Unit (HHCU), certifies firms and renovators who perform renovations in housing and child-occupied facilities built before 1978, and accredits training courses and training providers who wish to teach the required renovator and/or dust sampling technician courses for certification purposes.

Since the North Carolina LHMP-RRP rules adopt the EPA regulations by reference, future regulatory changes to the EPA RRP rules will be applicable to renovation work performed in North Carolina.

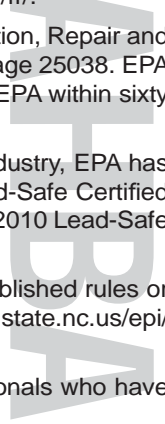
1. On Thursday, May 6, 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the "Lead: Amendment to the Opt-Out and Recordkeeping Provisions in the Renovation, Repair and Painting Program." This amendment was posted in the Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 87, starting on page 24802. To summarize, this change removes the "Opt-Out" provision and adds additional record keeping requirements which becomes effective July 6, 2010. To review this amendment, go to <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>.

2. On Thursday, May 6, 2010, the EPA issued the "Lead; Clearance and Clearance Testing Requirements for the Renovation, Repair and Painting Program: Proposed Rule". The proposed rule was posted in the Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 87, starting on page 25038. EPA is seeking comments on this proposed rule. If you plan on commenting, please provide your comments in writing to the EPA within sixty days of the posted date. To review this proposed rule, go to <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>.

3 The EPA has recently revised the "2008 Renovate Right" brochure. In an effort to streamline the information to the industry, EPA has provided an advance release so that individuals have the time necessary to print copies. Copies of the new "2010 Lead-Safe Certified Guide to Renovate Right" brochure can be found on the HHCU's Lead website listed below. The EPA has stated that the "2010 Lead-Safe Certified Guide to Renovate Right" brochure must be handed out starting July 6, 2010.

The HHCU is providing this information as a service. In the event that information within this document conflicts with published rules or regulations, the published rules and regulations take precedence. Please continue to visit the website at <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/lead/lhmp.html> for more information.

Contact the AHBA at 299-7001 for more information on the EPA Lead Paint Certification Laws. To see a list of professionals who have been certified, visit the AHBA website at www.AshevilleHBA.com and click on Hot Topics.



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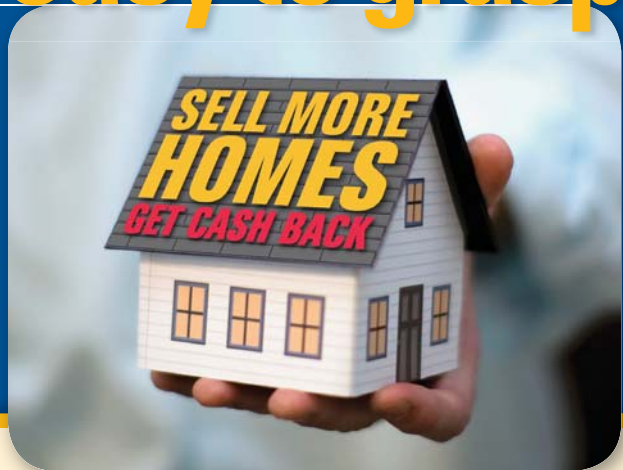
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